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to call this phase of their doctrine "Platonic Realism")—will provoke a retort from idealists that the New Realism is only an inverted idealism. To base the structure of the physical and psychological world upon purely ideal entities of number, space, and time, divorced from concrete physical and mental existences, is assuredly a New Realism, but a realism strangely like Platonic Idealism shorn of its poetry and its ethical bias.

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POST-LIMINIUM—LIONEL JOHNSON. New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1912.

Lionel Johnson belonged to a coterie of self-conscious and meticulous artists. Like Mrs. Meynell, Louise Imogen Guiney, Francis Thompson, John Davidson, and Michael Field, he worked slowly and finished elaborately. In turning the three hundred pages, which in this volume contain forty-four essays, one wonders if the fastidious author would ever have given them publicity and the sanction of his name. They are not essays to be ashamed of. Lionel Johnson could never have written anything false or futile. But they are the casual output of a hard-worked writer, reviewing, criticizing, giving estimates swiftly made on unrelated topics. To be sure, an estimate from Lionel Johnson is one from an opulent and discerning mind, but, when all is said and done, the book is made up of shreds and patches. The notes on his master, Pater, divided into four separate essays—"Mr. Pater on Plato," "Mr. Pater's Humor," "Mr. Pater and His Public," "The Work of Mr. Pater"—form the best and most complete study in the book—a book ranging from St. Francis, Blake, and Coventry Patmore to Parnell, Stevenson, and Burke.

Essays, however swiftly turned out, must retain the temperamental color of their author's mind, and many passages in these short pieces bespeak the rare quality of their writer; as when he says of Pater's Platonic Studies: "They are perfect expressions of the Academic spirit; *that leisurely travel of the mind among great things*"; or of Lucretius that he is the "Michael Angelo of verse, a Titanic workman, compelling language to obey his sovereign will and fall into majestic cadence, thunderous oceanic"; or of St. Francis: "The wind of the Spirit blowing where it listeth made Francis saint; the Fire of the Spirit chose to flame in his heart; Seraphic Love elected to inhabit there; 'this sort cometh not' but by the gift and grace of immediate genius, uncalculating, simple, and intuitive; it cannot come of planning, of studying and pondering, of wishes father to the thought." Or again: "No man can serve two masters: you cannot be Fielding's friend and also accept the colossal ineptitudes of our most popular novelists, witless, humorless, most brazen."

The essays are worth putting on the shelf with the permanent occupants, if for no other reason for their wide swath of allusion and their rarely felicitous turn of expression.

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J. M. SYNGE; A CRITICAL STUDY. By P. P. HOWE. New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1912.

There are publishers' advisers who remember well when about six or seven years ago the first neat manuscripts of Synge's *Plays* went the round of

the publishers. In vain they pleaded that here was genius and the real, great thing. Those higher up insisted that here was but a fad, soon to pass. "Lies and the Lives will be written of him soon," said John Masefield, but even those readers who pleaded his cause most eloquently failed to know how soon.

The present graceful and able study constantly compares Synge's sense for comedy with that of Shakespeare and Molière. This is by no means to compare Synge himself with Molière and Shakespeare. Quantity of output alone would forbid that. But it does point to the rare touch and unusual quality in the work. That Synge was a great genius no discerning reader can question. There is fine and keen characterization, exquisite poetry, and an almost unrivaled sensibility to life flowing by us in the work. His blind beggar says, "I'm thinking, by the mercy of God, it's few sees anything but them is blind for a space," and the intensity and minuteness of Synge's vision of all the wonder and beauty of the world is like the sudden, amazed awakening to life of one whose vision comes all of a sudden and after waiting. He sees life with surprise, with passion, and with tenderness. Not only this, but he sees the whole of life and its wide-spreading significance in a small room where a few Irish peasants talk and listen and remember. "The room," says Mr. Howe, "is never a vacuum like Ibsen's; nor an aquarium in which figures float, intense but dim, like Maeterlinck's, or beautiful and recondite like Mr. Yeats's; it is never a room into which we look from the outside. We are in the room. We have come in from a wide life, and we shall go out and down again in a moment to it. Over the half of the door come the little sounds of general humanity, sharpened to an intensity of clearness; over it are stretched maybe the colors of the sunset."

The present study is not a biography, but it is a very able study in dramatic criticism, and is, as all serious criticism should be, an appreciation. One by one, Mr. Howe presents the six short plays. He gives a chapter on Synge's use of the note-book; another on design and composition of the plays; one on characterization, and another on the prefaces. The bibliography which concludes the volume is all too short, bringing to mind the writer's untimely death. It is a very able and discerning introduction to the greatest genius of the Celtic Renaissance.

THERE ARE CRIMES AND CRIMES. By AUGUST STRINDBERG. Translated by EDWIN BJÖRKMAN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912.

The swift succession of Strindberg's translations proves to us that he is regarded as one of the permanent forces in literature. In reading the plays one wonders if, like Ibsen, he may not ultimately find his place among the great constructors of the drama rather than a great painter of contemporary character. There seems no doubt but that the difficulties and hardships of his own life cut him off from any balanced and normal conception of life.

The present play was written in 1899, when Strindberg was about fifty years old, at a period when, having undergone great mental strain and anxiety, he had turned to the great mystics for solace and certainty. Opposite his works of 1897-98 he wrote in the analytical summary of his work: "The great crisis at the age of fifty; revolutions in the life of